

## Chapter 3      Comments and Coordination

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Early and continuing coordination with the general public and appropriate public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process. Public participation and agency consultation for this project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal means, including formal meetings with members of the general public, focus groups, and resource agency staff; informal consultations with individuals and groups; Caltrans' project development team meetings; and circulation of draft documents and flyers. This chapter summarizes efforts to identify, address, and resolve project-related issues through consultation and coordination with federal, state, and local agencies, and with elected officials, community leaders, organizations, and other stakeholders from the neighborhoods and communities within the I-580 Eastbound HOV Lane Project corridor.

### 3.1 Overview of Public Involvement

A Community/Business Relations Plan (Public Participation Plan) was developed to establish methods and a schedule for conducting public outreach activities. Development of the Community Relations Plan included input from key stakeholders throughout the corridor. Activities to date have included corridor-wide public notice and two public information meetings to present the project purpose and need, describe project features, disclose anticipated impacts if the project is implemented, and solicit comments. It is anticipated that a public hearing will be held during the circulation period for the environmental document. A preferred project alternative will not be selected until after circulation of the Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) and consideration of all public and agency comments received.

#### 3.1.1 Early Consultation Meetings

##### 3.1.1.1 Meetings in March 2003

Consultation meetings were held on March 19, 2003, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Thomas Hart Middle School in the City of Pleasanton and on March 25, 2003, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Granada High School in the City of Livermore to inform the public and obtain input regarding the I-580 Eastbound HOV Lane Project. These meetings focused on the two-way HOV lane project that is described in Section 1.3.1, Alternatives Development Process. This project included a broader scope of improvements than presently contemplated. The project was down-scoped in the face of the state budget crisis and the temporary freeze on TCRP funds, which took place in late 2003.

Approximately 25 people (not including project staff and sponsors) attended the meetings. Participants in addition to Caltrans, ACCMA, and ACTIA representatives included residents of Livermore, Pleasanton, Danville, and Manteca, local elected officials, and representatives of a regional bicycle interest group and a major corridor employer.

Display advertisements noticed the meetings in *The Tri-Valley Herald*, *The Valley Times* (*Contra Costa Times*), and *The Livermore Independent*. A press release was distributed to *The Tri-Valley Herald*, *The Valley Times*, and *The Livermore Independent*, and a notice was placed on the

ACCMA's Web site. An informational fact sheet with the meeting notice was directly mailed to approximately 1,375 residents, property owners, and stakeholders to urge their attendance at the meeting. The meeting notice was also mailed along with a cover letter to more local, state, and federal staff and elected officials. Finally, e-mail notice was transmitted to each of the stakeholders interviewed during development of the Community Relations Plan (see Section 3.1.2, Stakeholder Interviews).

#### **3.1.1.2 Meetings in July 2005**

A public information meeting was held on July 28, 2005, after engineering and environmental studies were reinitiated for the I-580 Eastbound HOV Lane Project. This meeting was combined with meetings for the I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project and State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project, both of which are described in Section 1.1.3., Related Projects. The meeting was held from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the multipurpose room at Smith Elementary School in Livermore. Approximately 50 people, in addition to project sponsors and staff, attended the meeting, including residents of Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton, as well as Castro Valley, Walnut Creek, Hayward, and Manteca. Elected officials and representatives of Alameda County and the cities of Dublin and Livermore were also present.

The meeting was noticed through display advertisements in *The Tri-Valley Herald*, *The Valley Times*, *The Livermore Independent*, and *The Pleasanton Weekly*. A press release was distributed to *The Tri-Valley Herald*, *The Valley Times*, and *The Livermore Independent*, and notices were placed on the ACTIA and City of Livermore web sites. A one-page meeting notice was directly mailed to more than 4,750 residents, property owners, and stakeholders in the Tri-Valley to encourage their attendance at the joint project meeting. The meeting notice was mailed, along with a cover letter, to more than 100 elected officials and members of the advisory boards for each project.

#### **3.1.1.3 Format of the Meetings**

Both meetings combined an open house format with formal presentations. The open house enabled participants to view project exhibits and ask questions of staff one-on-one. Exhibits displayed included proposed project elements, traffic service needs, anticipated environmental impacts, and the proposed project schedule, with opportunities for the public to provide comments. The formal presentations included welcoming remarks from local elected officials and overviews of proposed project features, as well as the corridor planning context from project sponsors and staff. A question-and-answer session was conducted at each meeting; comment cards were distributed and collected at each meeting. Written and verbal comments received at or following the meetings were compiled in the meetings' Summary Reports. These were provided to the project team to ensure that input regarding alternatives or issues for study was being addressed in the development of alternatives and technical studies.

### **3.1.2 Stakeholder Interviews**

To begin the process of identifying community issues related to the original two-way I-580 HOV Lane Project, 15 key representatives representing a range of business, environmental, general community, and corridor interests were contacted for telephone interviews. Table 3.1 provides

information on the persons contacted, their interest or affiliation, and whether their interview was completed.

<b>Table 3-1: Summary of Stakeholder Interviews</b>		
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Status of Contact</b>
Hacienda Business Park	James Paxson, General Manager	Interviewed
Livermore Chamber of Commerce	Martha Espinoza, Director of Business and Special Events	Interviewed
Dublin Chamber of Commerce	Paul Moffat, Chair of Economic Committee	Interviewed
Friends of Dublin	David Haubert	Interviewed
Reliable Trucking, Inc. (Pleasanton-based member of California Trucking Association)	Eric Moore, President	Interviewed
Alameda County Fair Association	Rick Pickering, Executive Director	Interviewed
East Bay Bicycle Coalition	Robert Rayburn, Chair	Interviewed
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory	Scott Wilson, Community Relations Officer	Interviewed
Economic Development Alliance for Business (EDAB)	Bruce Kern, Executive Director	Expressed interest; interview never scheduled
Las Positas Golf Course	Golf Course Superintendent	Contacted; interview never scheduled
Tri-Valley Group of Bay Area Sierra Club	Donna Cabanne, Chair Conservation Committee	No response
Shea Homes	Laurel Wilson	No response
Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce	David Brouhard, President	No response
Pleasanton Downtown Association	Pamela Stoddard, Executive Director	Declined due to lack of direct connection with organization's focus
Bay Area Transportation and Land Use Coalition (BATLUC)	Stuart Cohen	Declined due to lack of time

Interviews lasted approximately 15 minutes and included a brief overview of the project. Participants were asked about their familiarity with the project, general or specific related interests or issues, preferred means of participating and being kept informed, preferred meeting locations, and recommendations of others to contact. Stakeholders contributed to the team's understanding of corridor issues and the development of meeting formats and notifications.

### **3.1.3 Other Outreach Methods and Activities**

#### **3.1.3.1 Project Web Site**

Participating and other local agencies post project information on their web sites. Meeting notices were posted to the web sites of ACCMA, ACTIA, Caltrans, and the City of Livermore. It is anticipated that availability of the EA/IS and the environmental document in its entirety will be posted to ACCMA's web site for ease of access and review by the general public.

### **3.1.3.2 Media Relations**

All media outreach has been coordinated through the Caltrans Public Information Office. Press releases have been prepared and issued to local media at key milestones, such as public meetings and the availability of the environmental document. The Caltrans media spokesperson is kept apprised of project activities to help in responding to media inquiries.

### **3.1.3.3 Mailing List**

A database of potentially interested or affected parties was developed and used for noticing public information meetings and the availability of the environmental document. The database was compared with ethnicity and income data compiled for the *Community Impact Assessment* (Parsons, 2006) to ensure that project noticing would address environmental justice communities (see Section 2.1.4.5, Environmental Justice). This database includes property owners and occupants along the corridor, regional and local agencies, local elected officials, community and special interest organizations, and the media. It is augmented from the sign-in sheets at every public meeting and updated periodically to reflect changes in property owners, elected officials and so forth; also, contact information for stakeholders and others who write in about the project is added to the list. The current project mailing list includes approximately 1,500 entries.

### **3.1.4 Public Meeting**

It is anticipated that a public meeting will be held, or at least the opportunity for a public meeting will be extended, before any action is taken to adopt a Negative Declaration or request a Finding of No Significant Impact on the I-580 Eastbound HOV Lane Project. The public meeting would be held during circulation of the Draft EA/IS for public and agency review. The date, place, and time of the meeting will be noticed similarly to the notices for the public information meetings, and this information will be included with the Notice of Availability of the Draft EA/IS that is circulated to the various parties listed in the Distribution List (see Chapter 5). If a meeting is held, the location and date of the meeting will be printed in the front pages of this document with the address to which written comments may be sent. The project will not be approved until all of the public and agency comments received during the circulation period have been reviewed and addressed.

## **3.2 Project Organization and Committees**

### **3.2.1 Lead and Cooperating Agencies**

FHWA and Caltrans are serving as the lead agencies in preparing this Draft EA/IS. FHWA is the federal lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Caltrans is the state lead agency under CEQA. As the local project sponsor, ACCMA is a cooperating agency in preparing this environmental document.

### **3.2.2 Project Development Team**

The Caltrans Project Development Team (PDT) is a broad-based technical committee consisting of the Caltrans Project Manager, the ACCMA Project Manager, and representatives of the various

functional units that are charged with project development and documentation. PDT members include representatives from Caltrans highway design, geometrics, traffic, right-of-way, environmental, consultant team specialists, and FHWA and local and regional agency representatives. The PDT serves as the project's technical advisory committee. The PDT meets on a regular basis to advise and assist the Project Managers in directing the course of project design and the technical studies. The PDT meeting minutes provide recordation of key project decisions over the course of project development.

### **3.2.3 External PDT**

To ensure that the I-580 Eastbound HOV Lane Project remains responsive to the interests and needs of Alameda County and the cities of Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton, project organization includes an External PDT. The External PDT includes representatives of local elected officials and county and local agencies that are convened periodically at key decision points in the project development process to provide insight or policy direction. The External PDT serves as the project's policy advisory committee. Members of the External PDT also bring project issues back to their respective elected officials or agencies.

## **3.3 Agency Consultation**

Regulatory agencies have been contacted over the course of the studies for consultation regarding project features, potential impact issues, technical methodologies, and documentation. Agencies were contacted early in the studies to establish presence of resources. The federal, state, and local agencies listed in the distribution list for the environmental document (see Chapter 5) will receive notification of the availability of this environmental document for review.

Agencies contacted or consulted during preparation of this environmental document include the following:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- California Department of Fish and Game
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control
- State Office of Historic Preservation
- Alameda County
- Association of Bay Area Governments
- AC Transit
- Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)
- Livermore-Amador Valley Transit Authority
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission
- City of Dublin
- City of Pleasanton
- City of Livermore

### 3.3.1 Coordination Regarding Cultural Resources

The following organizations and concerned parties were notified of the proposed project by letter and invited to comment regarding cultural resources in the project vicinity:

- Alameda County Historical Society
- Alameda County Planning Department
- Amador-Livermore Valley Historical Society
- Dublin Community Development Department
- Livermore Heritage Guild
- Livermore Planning Department
- Pleasanton Planning Department

A letter informing interested parties of the I-580 Eastbound HOV Lane Project was sent to area planning agencies, local governments, historical societies, and museums on March 31, 2003. The letter requested information or concerns regarding historic resources within the project area. No one replied with any concerns. The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted on August 22, 2002, to request a search of their Sacred Lands file. No Native American cultural resources were reported from the records search. Follow-up letters and telephone calls were made to all ten individuals named on the NAHC's list of interested Native American groups and individuals. Copies of the letters that were sent and received back are included in Appendix E, Agency Correspondence.

An Historic Properties Survey Report (HPSR) was submitted to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) on May 10, 2006. The report concluded that there are no historic properties within the architectural APE that meet eligibility criteria for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR). Because the Amador-Livermore Valley is sensitive for archaeological resources and because the nature of the current APE is such that subsurface testing is infeasible, additional work to evaluate potential archaeological resources may be necessary; see Section 2.1.8, Cultural Resources. On August 9, 2006, the SHPO concurred with the findings of the HPSR. The SHPO's letter of concurrence is included in Appendix E, Agency Correspondence. This concurrence concludes consultation regarding cultural resources (pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act).

### 3.3.2 Coordination Regarding Biological Resources

A delineation of wetlands in the project vicinity was conducted in accordance with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) requirements; also, there is habitat for California red-legged frog, which is federally listed as a threatened species and a state species of special concern. Finally, existing highway bridges and culverts provide habitat for swallows and bats. The project has been developed and designed to avoid impacts to these biological resources.

On <<date to be added when known>>, the wetlands delineation report was transmitted to USACE with a request for their jurisdictional determination. USACE returned its jurisdictional determination on <<date to be added when known>>. It is anticipated that the project will qualify for a nationwide Section 404 permit from USACE and that no further consultation with USACE will be required. On

<<date to be added when letters are sent>>, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) were sent copies of the relevant technical studies and the EA/IS with a letter requesting their concurrence that the project is not likely to adversely affect the species. These various letters are listed in Section 3.3.3, Correspondence, and copies are provided in Appendix E. <<Letters will be included when available.>> It is anticipated that the agencies' concurrence with the no adverse effect finding will be obtained before Caltrans would adopt a negative declaration or FHWA would sign a Finding of No Significant Impact for the proposed project.

### 3.3.3 Correspondence

This section lists the letters referred to in Section 3.3, Agency Consultations, copies of which are provided in Appendix E.

Agency	Date	
USFWS	<<date to be added>>	Requesting concurrence that the project is not likely to adversely affect special-status species.
CDFG	<<date to be added>>	Requesting concurrence that the project is not likely to adversely affect special-status species.
USFWS	August 25, 2003, and September 14, 2005	Listing and update listing of rare, threatened, and candidate species.
CDFG	<<dates to be added>>	Listing and update listing of rare, threatened, and candidate species.
USACE	<<dates to be added>>	Request and receipt of wetlands/waters jurisdictional determination.
NAHC	August 22, 2002	Notification of the proposed project and a request for information and concerns.
NAHC	September 4, 2002	Response letter identifying Native American contacts for project area.
Ella Rodriguez	September 11, 2002	Notification of the proposed project and a request for information and concerns.
Jakki Kehl	September 11, 2002	Notification of the proposed project and a request for information and concerns.
Katherine Erolinda Perez	September 11, 2002	Notification of the proposed project and a request for information and concerns.
Marjorie Ann Reid	September 11, 2002	Notification of the proposed project and a request for information and concerns.
Amah/Mutsun Tribal Band Michelle Zimmer	September 11, 2002	Notification of the proposed project and a request for information and concerns.
Amah/Mutsun Tribal Band Irene Zwierlein	September 11, 2002	Notification of the proposed project and a request for information and concerns.
Indian Canyon Mutsun Band Ann Marie Sayer	September 11, 2002	Notification of the proposed project and a request for information and concerns.
The Ohlone Indian Tribe Andrew Galvan	September 11, 2002	Notification of the proposed project and a request for information and concerns.
Thomas P. Soto Howard S. Soto	September 11, 2002	Notification of the proposed project and a request for information and concerns.

Agency	Date	
Trina Marine Ruano Family Ramona Garibay	September 11, 2002	Notification of the proposed project and a request for information and concerns.
Alameda County Historical Society	March 31, 2003	Letter requesting concerns regarding historic resources in project vicinity.
Alameda County Planning Department James Sorensen, Planning Director	March 31, 2003	Letter requesting concerns regarding historic resources in project vicinity.
Amador-Livermore Valley Historical Society	March 31, 2003	Letter requesting concerns regarding historic resources in project vicinity.
City of Dublin Community Development Department Eddie Peabody, Jr., Director	March 31, 2003	Letter requesting concerns regarding historic resources in project vicinity.
City of Livermore Planning Department Mark Roberts, Director	March 31, 2003	Letter requesting concerns regarding historic resources in project vicinity.
City of Pleasanton Planning Department Brian W. Swift, Director	March 31, 2003	Letter requesting concerns regarding historic resources in project vicinity.
Livermore Heritage Guild	March 31, 2003	Letter requesting concerns regarding historic resources in project vicinity.